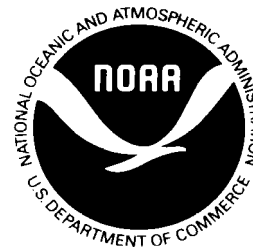


# Monkfish Fishery Exemptions



*Unless otherwise noted, the regulations described below apply to fishing vessels issued valid Federal fishing permits or any vessel fishing in Federal waters. (See 50 CFR § 648.4 for Federal fishing permit requirements.) This information sheet is only a summary of applicable fishing regulations and is not a substitute for the actual regulations which can be found at 50 CFR Part 648.*

*Limited access monkfish category A and B vessels must fish their monkfish days-at-sea (DAS) in a monkfish exempted fishery. In addition, monkfish category C and D vessels allocated less than 40 Northeast (NE) multispecies DAS may also fish the difference between their 40 monkfish DAS and their allocated NE multispecies DAS, as monkfish only DAS, provided the vessel fishes its monkfish-only DAS in a monkfish exempted fishery.*

*An exempted fishery is one that the Regional Administrator has determined will result in a minimal bycatch of regulated multispecies and will not jeopardize fishing mortality objectives of the FMP. Specifically, the percentage of regulated multispecies bycatch must be less than 5 percent, by weight, of total catch. Following are the current monkfish exempted fisheries for the Gulf of Maine, Georges Bank and Southern New England Exemption Areas (the Mid-Atlantic Exemption Area is exempt in its entirety).*

## **Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank (GOM/GB) Exemption Area:**

The following fishery has been determined to be consistent with the exemption criteria:

1. GOM/GB Monkfish Gillnet Exempted Fishery (officially known as the GOM/GB Dogfish and Monkfish Gillnet Exempted Fishery) as defined by the following coordinates, provided the vessel complies with the specifications listed below.

### **GOM/GB Monkfish Gillnet Exemption Area**

<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
41/35' N.	70/00' W.
42/49.5' N.	70/00' W.
42/49.5' N.	69/40' W.
43/12' N.	69/00' W.
Maine Shoreline	69/00' W.

### **GOM/GB Monkfish Gillnet Exempted Fishery Specifications:**

- a) From July 1 through September 14, an exempted fishery for monkfish may be conducted by vessels using gillnet gear only.

b) Vessels fishing under this exemption are restricted to a minimum mesh size of 10-inch (diamond) throughout the net.

c) No species other than monkfish, or American lobster up to 10 percent by weight of all other species on board up to 100 lobsters for trips of 24 hours or less, or 200 lobsters for trips longer than 24 hours, whichever is less, may be retained on board the vessel and landed.

### **Southern New England (SNE) Exemption Area:**

The following fisheries have been determined to be consistent with the exemption criteria:

1. SNE Monkfish Gillnet Exempted Fishery (officially known as the SNE Monkfish, Skate & Dogfish Gillnet Exempted Fishery) as defined below, provided the vessel complies with the specifications listed below.

### **SNE Monkfish Gillnet Exemption Area**

Defined by a line running from the Massachusetts shoreline at 41/35' N. latitude and 70/00' W. longitude, south to its intersection with the outer boundary of the EEZ, southwesterly along the outer boundary of the EEZ, and bounded on the west by the eastern boundary of the Mid-Atlantic Exemption Area.

#### **SNE Monkfish Gillnet Exempted Fishery Specifications:**

a) The exempted fishery for monkfish may be conducted by vessels using gillnet gear only.

b) Vessels fishing under this exemption are restricted to a minimum mesh size of 10-inch (diamond) throughout the net.

c) Vessels fishing under this exemption may not fish for, harvest, possess, or land any species of fish other than monkfish and skate, and the current exempted and bycatch species allowed in the SNE Exemption Area. \*\*

\*\*Butterfish, dogfish (trawl), herring, mackerel, ocean pout, scup, shrimp, squid, summer flounder, silver hake, and weakfish, and SNE bycatch species: Conger eels, searobins, black sea bass, red hake, tautog (blackfish), blowfish, cunner, John Dory, mullet, bluefish, tilefish, longhorn sculpin, fourspot flounder, alewife, hickory shad, American shad, blueback herring, sea ravens, Atlantic croaker, spot, swordfish, skate and skate parts-- up to 10 percent, by weight, of other species on board, and American lobster--up to 10 percent by weight of all other species on board up to 100 lobsters for trips of 24 hours or less or 200 lobsters for trips longer than 24 hours, whichever is less.

2. SNE Monkfish Trawl Fishery Exemption (officially known as the SNE Monkfish & Skate Trawl Exempted Fishery) as defined below, provided the vessel complies with the specifications listed below.

### **SNE Monkfish Trawl Exemption Area**

The SNE Monkfish Trawl Fishery Exemption Area is defined as the area bounded on the north by a line extending eastward along 40/10' N. lat., and bounded on the west by the eastern boundary of the Mid-Atlantic Exemption Area.

#### **SNE Monkfish Trawl Exempted Fishery Specifications:**

a) Vessels fishing under this exemption are restricted to a minimum mesh size of 8-inch square or

diamond mesh applied throughout the codend for at least 45 continuous meshes forward of the terminus of the net. However, the monkfish regulations at 50 CFR 648.92(c)(1)(i), require limited access monkfish vessels fishing under a monkfish DAS to use trawl gear using a minimum mesh size of 10 inch square or 12 inch diamond mesh throughout the codend for at least 45 continuous meshes forward of the terminus of the net. All nets with a mesh size smaller than the minimum mesh size must be properly stowed. Nets must also be stowed when transiting to and from the SNE Monkfish Fishery Exemption Area from north of 40°10' N. latitude and east of the Mid-Atlantic Exemption Area boundary.

b) Vessels fishing in this exemption may not fish for, possess, or land any species of fish other than monkfish, skate and the current exempted and bycatch species allowed in the SNE Exemption Area.\*\*

**Mid-Atlantic (MA) Exemption Area:**

Vessels fishing in the MA Exemption Area are exempt from the NE multispecies 5-percent bycatch criteria specifications and may, therefore, may fish under a monkfish-only DAS within the entire MA Exemption Area, provided that they do not possess or land regulated multispecies finfish.

This is a simplified summary of the measures in effect under the Monkfish Fishery Management Plan. This summary has no legal standing. You should also get a copy of the official rules as published in the *Federal Register*.

## Monkfish Exempted Fisheries

